How do you know if it’s a **REAL** website?

**L—Look at the links**

Judge the website by the company it keeps

Forward links: What sites does the site you’re looking at link to?

* What are the URLs?
  + Do the domain names change?
  + Is there a variety of domain names?
    - If many of the domain names stay the same, there is little variety in sources
  + What are the extensions (.com, .org, .edu) of the forward links?
* Are the links biased?
  + - If the author links to sites that only support his/her viewpoint, or links to sites you know to be untrustworthy, you may not want to trust the site.

External Links: Who links to the site you’re looking at?

* Look at who is linking the site
  + How? Do a Google search for link: + the site you’re looking at
  + Example: link:www.formanschool.org (no spaces)

For best results, truncate the URL down to the main page:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full website address: | Truncated to domain name: |
| <http://www.formanschool.org/experience/sports> | formanschool.org |

Once you have the results, ask yourself:

* Who is linking to the website?
  + Look at the URL extension (.com, .org, .edu)
* Why are they linking to the website?
* What do other sites say about the information on the site?

Full URL: <http://www.formanschool.org/home/content.asp?id=106&zZsec=Academics>

Truncated URL: <http://www.formanschool.org>

What other sites does the site you’re looking at link to?

Forward links—Look at what other sites the page links to, and ask yourself:

What are the URLs? of the forward links?

Is the domain name the same on many of the forwarding links? That means there’s little variety in the sources they used

Do the domain names change?

If the domain name is the same in many of the forward links, it’s likely that the same person wrote all the material